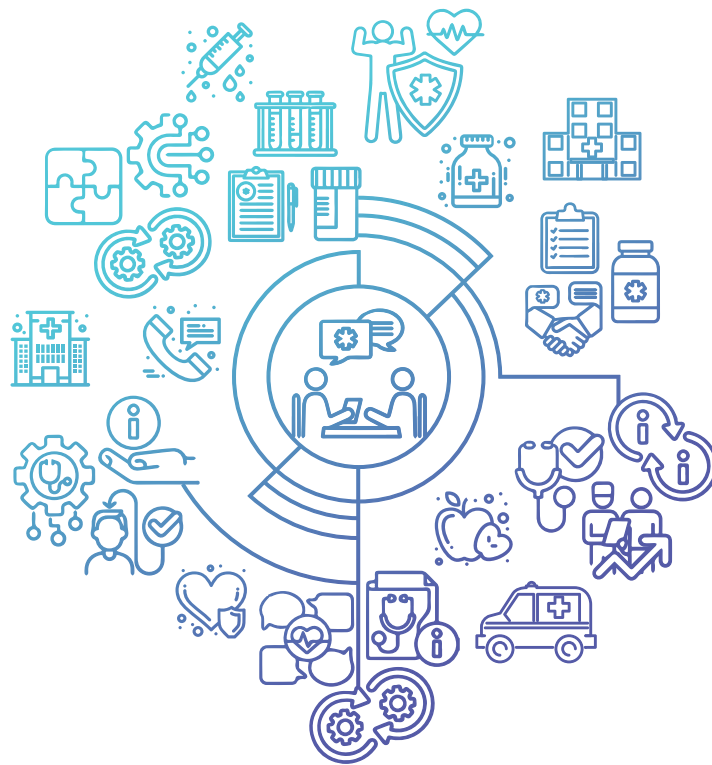


TECHNICAL REPORT

MHLS
MALAYSIA HEALTH
LITERACY SURVEY
2023
(NMRR-23-00115-TXM)



MINISTRY OF HEALTH MALAYSIA
INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH BEHAVIOURAL RESEARCH



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Institute for Health Behavioural Research,
National Institutes of Health,
Ministry of Health, Malaysia

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ISBN 978-967-5340-96-3

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Suggested citation: Institute for Health Behavioural Research (IHBR), National Institutes of Health, Ministry of Health Malaysia. 2024. Malaysia Health Literacy Survey 2023 (NMRR-23-0115-TXM)

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Published by:

Institute for Health Behavioural Research,
Block B3, National Institute of Health Complex,
No.1, Jalan Setia Murni U13/52, Section U13,
Setia Alam, 40170 Shah Alam, Selangor.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, the authors would like to thank the Director General of Health for his great support in the implementation of the Malaysia Health Literacy Survey (MHLS) 2023. Our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the Deputy Director General of Health (Research and Technical Support), the Director of Institute for Health Behavioural Research, Director of Institute for Public Health, Director of Health Education Division, Principal Investigator NHMS 2023, Research and Data Analysis Team of MHLS 2023 for their invaluable guidance, support, and cooperation throughout the process of survey implementation, analysis, and report writing for Health Literacy Module. The MHLS 2023 were funded by the Ministry of Health Malaysia and the authors would like to express their gratitude to the Ministry for this financial support.

We also wish to express our heartfelt thanks to all State Health Directors, State Liaison Officers who have been very supportive in providing resources and also to all field supervisors, nurses, data collectors, scouts, drivers, as well as all individuals who have assisted in the successful implementation of the Health Literacy survey. Last but not least, our utmost appreciation goes to all the respondents who have successfully participated in the survey. Their contributions in the survey would facilitate the Ministry of Health in gaining insights on health literacy level among the Malaysian population and formulate effective strategies in addressing related issues and challenges.

Be well. Be health literate.

MHLS Team

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ministry of Health (MOH) had assigned the Institute for Health Behavioural Research (IHBR) to lead the Malaysian Health Literacy Survey (MHLS) as part of strategic planning on observing the health literacy level among the Malaysian population.

This project was fully funded by the Ministry of Health Malaysia, project code NMRR-23-00115-TXM. This survey obtained ethical clearance from MOH- KKM/ NIHSEC/P19-1453(7) and was carried out within a period of 1 year. Designed as a quantitative study, the outcomes of the survey intended to determine the prevalence of adult as well as adolescent health literacy by socio-demographic subgroups. This survey is crucial to identify and evaluate the strengths and limitations of the country in addressing health issues, as health literacy is progressively seen as an indicator to describe a nation's health status.

Although the overall health literacy level records in Malaysia show that majority of the population is categorised as having sufficient health literacy, it is interesting to note that when compared to the whole spectrum, the average score for Malaysians is 36.5 (out of the total score of 50). This score indicates that although the overall population falls under the sufficient category (33-42), a large number of the population belongs to the lower end of the sufficient category. It is recommended that to achieve a comfortable sufficient category in the health literacy index score, the average score should ideally reach a mean of 37. This highlights that health literacy in Malaysia is considerably unsatisfactory, and there are still rooms for improvements to increase the score level.

Limited health literacy level is more prominent among respondents in the older age group with a lower education level and lower household income, whereas the majority of respondents possessing sufficient or excellent health literacy level are among the younger age group (below 50 years old), having a higher education level and higher income.

The baseline data obtained among adolescents aged 14 to 17 years old who participated in answering the MyMOHLAA-Q showed that many were found to have difficulties in dealing with health-related information, low health-related communication skills, a passive attitude towards one's own health and health information, and moderate health-related knowledge.

This report is meant for policy makers, stakeholders, funding agencies and those who are interested in the study topic. The findings will detail the prevalence and mean score on health literacy level among Malaysians and shall be comparable to 2019 health literacy results.

This will provide the government and other agencies related to healthcare with an insight on ways to navigate the health literacy issue by taking into consideration, the various demographic factors.



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